

The Condition of School Administration in Arizona: 2004

Executive Summary

Four major issues are addressed in this brief on Arizona school administration: supply and demand, preparation and licensure of school administrators, administrative costs, and incentives for school administrators. Although the data suggest an oversupply of certified administrators, data related to administrator supply and demand are not particularly reliable and not easily available. Moreover, there is a possible mismatch between supply and demand, particularly in the urban and rural areas serving large numbers of Hispanic students. No available data compare the performances of graduates from approved administrator certification programs and candidates who apply directly to the state. A system that identifies the best candidates for administrator preparation would encourage more talented educators to pursue training for administrative leadership positions and help school districts effectively balance the needs and demographics of communities with who leads their schools.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) create opportunities for school districts and colleges of education to collaborate on recruitment, selection, and training of school administrators. Colleges of education and school districts would select the best candidates for leadership preparation and training by jointly examining each candidate's record of accomplishments and demonstrated leadership skills.
- Colleges of education strengthen the teaching and learning focus of educational administration programs.
- The Arizona legislature provide new incentives to attract and keep high-quality administrators. These incentives may include remuneration to attract candidates to less desirable districts and schools, and multi-year contracts to ensure greater stability.
- The ADE develop an up-to-date database to track staff and administrator salaries by school district, and to track information on the supply and demand for administrators.
- The ADE track the performance of graduates of administrator preparation programs and of individuals applying directly to the state for licensure to assess and compare the overall effectiveness of the different routes to certification.